

THE PICTURE OF DORIAN
GRAY 199

"I don't believe it is my picture."

"Can't you see your ideal in it?" said Dorian,
bitterly.

"My ideal, as you call it . . ."

"As you called it."

"There was nothing evil in it, nothing
shameful. You were
to me such an ideal as I shall never meet again.
This is the
face of a satyr."

"It is the face of my soul."

"Christ! what a thing I must have
worshipped! It has the
eyes of a devil."

"Each of us has Heaven and Hell in him,
Basil," cried
Dorian, with a wild gesture of despair.

Hallward turned again to the portrait, and
gazed at it. "My
God! if it is true," he exclaimed, "and this is
what you have
done with your life, why, you must be worse even
than those
who talk against you fancy you to be!" He held
the light up
again to the canvas, and examined it. The
surface seemed to
be quite undisturbed, and as he had left it. It was
from within,
apparently, that the foulness and horror had
come. Through
some strange quickening of inner life the leprosies
of sin were
slowly eating the thing away. The rotting of a
corpse in a
watery grave was not so fearful.

His hand shook, and the candle fell from its
socket on the
floor, and lay there sputtering. He placed his
foot on it and
put it out. Then he flung himself into the
rickety chair that
was standing by the table and buried his face in
his hands.

"Good God, Dorian, what a lesson! what an
awful lesson I!"
There was no answer, but he could hear the young
man sobbing
at the window. "Pray, Dorian, pray," he
murmured. "What
is it that one was taught to say in one's
boyhood? 'Lead us
not into temptation. Forgive us our sins. Wash
away our
iniquities/ Let us say that together. The
prayer of your
pride has been answered. The prayer of your
repentance will
be answered also. I worshipped you too much.
I am pun-
ished for it. You worshipped yourself too
much. We are
both punished."

Dorian Gray turned slowly around, and looked at
him with
tear-dimmed eyes. "It is too late, Basil," he
faltered.

"It is never too late, Dorian, Let us kneel
down and try
if we cannot remember a prayer. Isn't there a
verse some-
where, * Though your sins be as scarlet, yet I will
make them as
white as snow * ? **

"Those words mean nothing to me now."